

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicants have added new claims 15-18. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-9 and 12-14 include patentable subject matter. Applicants also thank the Examiner for considering the references submitted in the Information Disclosure Statement filed with the application on February 20, 2004, and for providing an initialed PTO Form 1449.

The Examiner is kindly requested to acknowledge acceptance of the drawings in the next Office Action.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Morita et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,680,818).

35 U.S.C. § 112 Rejections:

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. The Examiner specifically states that the term --radially-- should be inserted before “inward” in claims 2 and 5, that the phrase --in a peripheral direction-- should be inserted after “groove” in the last line of claim 9, and that the term --wall-- should be inserted after “tubular” in claim 10, line 5. The Examiner is also not clear with respect to the term “concavo-convexly” recited in claim 10.

Applicants have amended the claims in view of the Examiner’s suggestions in a manner thought to resolve the rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Rejections:

Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Morita et al. Morita is commonly owned by Fuji Photo Film, Ltd. and discloses a magnetic tape cartridge and a reel-rotation restraining means (braking gear).

The present invention is concerned with dust-proofing measures taken to prevent dust from entering the cartridge at places such as gear openings, for example, gaps between a braking gear and an engaging gear used to rotate the tape in the cartridge. In one aspect of the present invention, to prevent dust from entering the cartridge, in an assembled state, the releasing member, the guide wall portion, and the tubular wall portion are formed in a labyrinthine structure (see page 37, starting at line 19 of the present specification).

In the rejection, the Examiner refers to the Morita device, and in particular, engaging portion 27, braking member 4 with tubular wall portion 44, releasing member 63, and guide wall portion 21, alleging a concavo-convex shape shown in Figures 3, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23, 25, and 29.

In Morita et al., restraining member 4 includes disc portion 41 with restraining gear 42. Restraining gear 42 meshes with upper ends of stopper protrusions 27 provided on bottom wall 21a of reel hub 21 (see col. 7, line 60 - col. 8, line 13). A releasing member 6 is also interposed between the restraining member 4 and the bottom wall 21a of the reel hub 21. Pushing up portions 63 on the releasing member 6 can be inserted through holes 26 of reel hub 21, and when inserted, can rotate integrally with reel 2 (see col. 8, line 49 - col. 9, line 7). However, the Morita et al. structure does not disclose or suggest a labyrinthine structure (see page 37, line 19- page 38, line 1 for a description of the structure of the present invention).

With respect to new claims 15-18, Applicants note that by making the amount by which the rotation restricting ribs and the boss portion 52 for a clutch can be engaged large (i.e., the amount by which the rotation restricting ribs can be inserted into the rotation restricting grooves 90), the stress received from the reel when the reel rotates can be mitigated. At the same time, the ability to guide the clutch member 84 when the clutch is moving up or down improves, and also joggling of the clutch member 84 when the braking member is positioned at the rotation permitted position is suppressed.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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